

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A sterilization container system comprising:

an enclosure defining an interior volume;
an upwardly facing surface in the interior volume;
a flexible elastomeric mat having a downwardly facing surface resting upon the upwardly facing surface; and

a pattern of ridges extending from the downwardly facing surface, wherein the
~~downwardly facing surface is provided with a pattern of ridges, and~~ wherein the pattern is such that no fold line can traverse the mat from one side to the other without intersecting at least one ridge.

2. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the pattern is such that no fold line can traverse the mat from one side to the other without intersecting a plurality of the ridges.

3. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the ridges have a height of 0.5 mm to 10.0 mm.

4. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 3 wherein the ridges have a height of 0.75 mm to 5.0 mm.

5. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 4 wherein the ridges have a height of 1.0 mm to 4.0 mm.
6. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the flexible elastomeric mat is formed of silicone.
7. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 6 wherein the silicone has a hardness of equal to or less than 90A on the Shore A Scale.
8. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 16 wherein the pattern extends substantially across a dimension of the ~~lower~~ downwardly facing surface.
9. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the mat further comprises a plurality of upwardly projecting members.
10. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the mat further comprises a plurality of apertures therethrough.
11. (currently amended) TheA sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the pattern is continuous.

12. (currently amended) ~~The~~A sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the pattern is discontinuous.

13. (currently amended) ~~The~~A sterilization container system according to claim 1 wherein the pattern comprises concentric shapes.

14. (currently amended) A method of sterilizing an item comprises the steps of:

placing a flexible, elastomeric mat into an enclosure having an interior volume;

placing the item onto the mat; and

levitating the mat above a bottom surface of the enclosure via a pattern of ridges ~~on~~
extending from a lower surface of the mat, the pattern being such that no fold line can traverse the mat from one side to the other without intersecting at least one ridge.

15. (new) A mat for use with a sterilization container, the mat comprising:

a first side;

a second side;

an upper surface;

a lower surface; and

a pattern of ridges extending from the lower surface, wherein the pattern is such that no fold line can traverse the mat from the first side to the second side without intersecting at least one ridge.

16. (new) The mat according to claim 15 wherein the pattern is such that no fold line can traverse the mat from the first side to the second side without intersecting a plurality of ridges.

17. (new) The mat according to claim 15 wherein the pattern extends substantially across a dimension of the lower surface.

18. (new) The mat according to claim 15 wherein the pattern is continuous.

19. (new) The mat according to claim 15 wherein the pattern is discontinuous.

20. (new) The mat according to claim 15 wherein the upper surface further comprises a plurality of upwardly projecting members extending therefrom.